



# ADS CENTER

Resource Center to Address  
Discrimination and Stigma

BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN WHERE WE ARE AND WHERE WE NEED TO BE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
AND HUMAN SERVICES  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
Services Administration  
Center for Mental Health Services

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## Free Training Teleconference

## Stigma in the Military: Strategies to Reduce Mental Health Stigma Among Veterans and Active Duty Personnel

### Please Join Us

The SAMHSA Resource Center to Address Discrimination and Stigma Associated With Mental Illness invites you to participate in a free teleconference training titled, "**Stigma in the Military: Strategies to Reduce Mental Health Stigma Among Veterans and Active Duty Personnel.**"

**Date: Thursday, March 30, 2006**  
**Time: 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM (Eastern Time)**

To participate in this training teleconference, please complete the online registration form located at <http://www.stopstigma.samhsa.gov/regpage.cfm>. For additional teleconference information, please refer to the [Training](#) section of the SAMHSA ADS Center web site or contact a technical assistance representative by e-mail at [stopstigma@samhsa.hhs.gov](mailto:stopstigma@samhsa.hhs.gov) or by telephone at 1-800-540-0320. Please pass this invitation along to interested friends and colleagues. *Please note: Registration for this teleconference will close at 5:00 p.m., Eastern time, on Wednesday, March 29, 2006.*

### Training Sponsor

This teleconference is sponsored by the SAMHSA Resource Center to Address Discrimination and Stigma (ADS Center), a project of the Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS) of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The session is free to all participants.

### Training Summary

*Stigma is a real problem. It's a societal issue, but it is much more pronounced in the military.*" — Col. Thomas Burke, Director of Mental Health Policy, U.S. Department of Defense, *Stars and Stripes*, July 22, 2005

Like their civilian counterparts, many active-duty and veteran United States military personnel are faced with the prospect of having a mental illness. However, unlike

ordinary citizens, the situations under which these individuals work and live impact profoundly upon their ability to maintain mental health. Soldiers training for and participating in combat experience high levels of stress that heighten anxiety and increase the chances for depression. Combat trauma, whether experienced in the form of bodily injury or fatigue from a constant exposure to threat, increases the likelihood of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and the possibility for poor performance or inappropriate conduct.

The impact of military reality on individual mental health is complicated further by the pronounced stigma associated with mental illness within military communities. Service members frequently cite fear of personal embarrassment, fear of disappointing comrades, fear of losing the opportunity for career advancement, and fear of dishonorable discharge as motivations to hide the symptoms of mental illness from colleagues, friends and family. This silence and the attitudes and perceptions perpetuating it pose a significant challenge to those charged with making sure that the United States' fighting force is improving itself and taking care of its own members.

In response to this challenge, advocates from both within and outside the U.S. military and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs are working to counter stigma and reverse the fear that causes soldiers and veterans to associate mental illness with personal and professional failure. Some initiatives, like the U.S. Air Force's Suicide Prevention Program, provide a comprehensive approach to mental health education, training, and illness prevention that is made visible and acceptable inside military communities. Other programs seek to explore less stigmatizing methods of identifying illnesses and delivering mental health services by taking advantage of communication tools such as the Internet. Still other programs seek to promote the value of talking about illness by encouraging peer recognition and support for recovery from mental health problems.

## ***Training Goals***

- Provide information on the anti-stigma component of the U.S. Air Force's suicide prevention program.
- Discuss stigma reduction efforts within the Veteran's Administration.
- Discuss the value of increasing peer support program efforts.

## ***Event Speakers***

### ***Lt. Col. Rick L. Campise, Ph.D., ABPP, BSC, US Air Force***

Lt. Col. Campise currently serves as Chief, Air Force Deployment Behavioral Health and Chief, Air Force Substance Abuse Prevention. He is revising the Air Force's mental health deployment teams, restructuring its combat stress management program, and enhancing its treatment of deployment issues throughout the deployment cycle. He also chairs the Air Force Deployment Behavioral Health Working Group which oversees 19 deployment subcommittees. He served as the Chief, [Air Force Suicide Prevention Program](#) (AFSPP) from 2001-2005. Lt. Col. Campise was selected as a co-winner of the 2004 American Association of Suicidologists Presidential Citation for Outstanding Contributions in Suicide Prevention, was an Air Force finalist for the 1999 Joint Chiefs of Staff Award for Excellence in Military Medicine, and received the 1997 American Psychological Association Division 19 Mid-Career Military Psychologist of the Year Award.

### ***Maj. Steven E. Pflanz, US Air Force, MC, FS***

Maj. Pflanz is the Senior Psychiatry Policy Analyst for the Air Force Medical Operations Agency. He is a board certified psychiatrist who served as the psychiatric

consultant to the Wyoming Suicide Prevention Task Force from 2001-2003 and a NASA consultant during 2003 astronaut selection cycle. Dr. Pflanz is Chief of the [Air Force Suicide Prevention Program](#), Vice President of the Academy of Organizational and Occupational Psychiatry, Chairman of the American Psychiatric Association's Committee on Psychiatry and the Workplace, and a member of the Suicide Prevention Action Network USA's national board of directors.

***Susan McCutcheon, RN, Ed.D.***

Dr. McCutcheon is the Program Manager for Special Projects in the Office of Mental Health Services at the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) in Washington, D.C. She began her career with the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) in 1982 and has held various administrative and clinical positions during that time. Most of her VHA career has been in the field of mental health with a major emphasis on the people with serious mental illnesses. She has received graduate degrees in Psychiatric / Mental Health Nursing, Industrial / Organizational Psychology and Educational Administration. In 2001, she was selected as a Robert Wood Johnson Executive Nurse Fellow. Her awards include the Cleveland Federal Executive Employee Recognition Award (1997) by the Cleveland Federal Executive Board and the Mental Health Professional of the Year by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) - Metro Cleveland (1998).

***Moe Armstrong, M.B.A., M.A.***

Mr. Armstrong is Director of Consumer and Family Affairs at the Vinfen Corporation, a mental health services provider in Cambridge, Massachusetts. In addition to being a veteran and self-identified consumer of mental health services, he has served as past Chair of the Veterans' Subcommittee for the NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) National Board. He also co-founded (with his wife, Naomi) the Peer Educators Project, a program that relies on people with mental illnesses and their families to teach others how to live with mental illnesses. In addition to the Peer Educators Project, Mr. Armstrong has used his experience as a veteran and his background in peer support to reach out to other veterans through the [Vet to Vet](#) initiative. Vet to Vet is a support program principally focused on the unique experiences of veterans and is designed to help them learn how to live with the effects of mental illnesses from other vets who have 'walked in their shoes.'

## ***Presentations***

Speaker presentations will take approximately 60 minutes and will be followed by a 30-minute question-and-answer period. Participants will receive confirmation of their registration by e-mail shortly before the scheduled conference date. This confirmation message will include telephone dial-in instructions and a link to presentation materials posted in the [Training](#) section of the SAMHSA ADS Center Web site.

*The SAMHSA ADS Center is a program of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Mental Health Services.*

### ***About the SAMHSA ADS Center***

SAMHSA's Resource Center to Address Discrimination and Stigma (ADS Center) helps people design, implement and operate programs that reduce discrimination and stigma associated with mental illnesses. With the most up-to-date research and information, the ADS Center helps individuals, organizations and governments counter such discrimination and stigma in the community, in the workplace, and in the media.

0320. To comment on the materials included in this update, please send e-mail to [stopstigma@samhsa.hhs.gov](mailto:stopstigma@samhsa.hhs.gov), or write a letter to Resource Center to Address Discrimination and Stigma Associated with Mental Illness; Informational Updates; 11420 Rockville Pike; Rockville, MD 20852. To unsubscribe from this distribution list using the subscribed e-mail account, click [here](#). To unsubscribe your address from a different e-mail account, send a message to [Majordomo@listserve.shs.net](mailto:Majordomo@listserve.shs.net) with the following command in the message body: unsubscribe stopstigma [Your E-mail Address].

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